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VAMPIRE GAME™

JUDAL

10

TOKYOPOP®

VAMPIRE GAME

Volume 10

by

JUDAL

TOKYOPOP®

HAMBURG // LONDON // LOS ANGELES // TOKYO

VAMPIRE GAME

The Story Thus Far...

This is the tale of the Vampire King Duzell and his quest for revenge against the good King Phelios, a valiant warrior who slew the vampire a century ago. Now Duzell has returned, reincarnated as a feline foe to deliver woe to... well, that's the problem. Who is the reincarnation of King Phelios?

Ishtar, Duzell and the rest of her royal regulars have journeyed to Zi Alda to visit Ishtar's sick aunt and to test the familial waters, murky as they may be, for any sign of Phelios' reincarnation. So far the sneaky little king hasn't shown up, but Ishtar and Duzell have found a scheming little military wife named Leene, who would like nothing more than to ensure that Ishtar never again breathes that fresh Phelostan air. Or any air, for that matter. Though married to Ashley, the General of the Zi Alda army, Leene has a thing for Yuujel, the highly-desired prince of Zi Alda, who was recently revealed to be none other than Yujinn, Princess Ishtar's magic teacher.

Now, Ishtar doesn't love Yuujel, she loves Darres, but Leene doesn't realize this, and fearing that the princess may be in town to snatch up her favorite free prince, she's made a decision to use poison to permanently end Ishtar's prince-stealing ways. However, someone has gotten the better of our little Leene. Someone with a sick sense of humor. They've leaked word of Leene's plot to the public, leaving poor Leene stuck in the Zi Alda ballroom with what may be a glass of very cruel intentions in her hand.

吸血遊戯
Act.16

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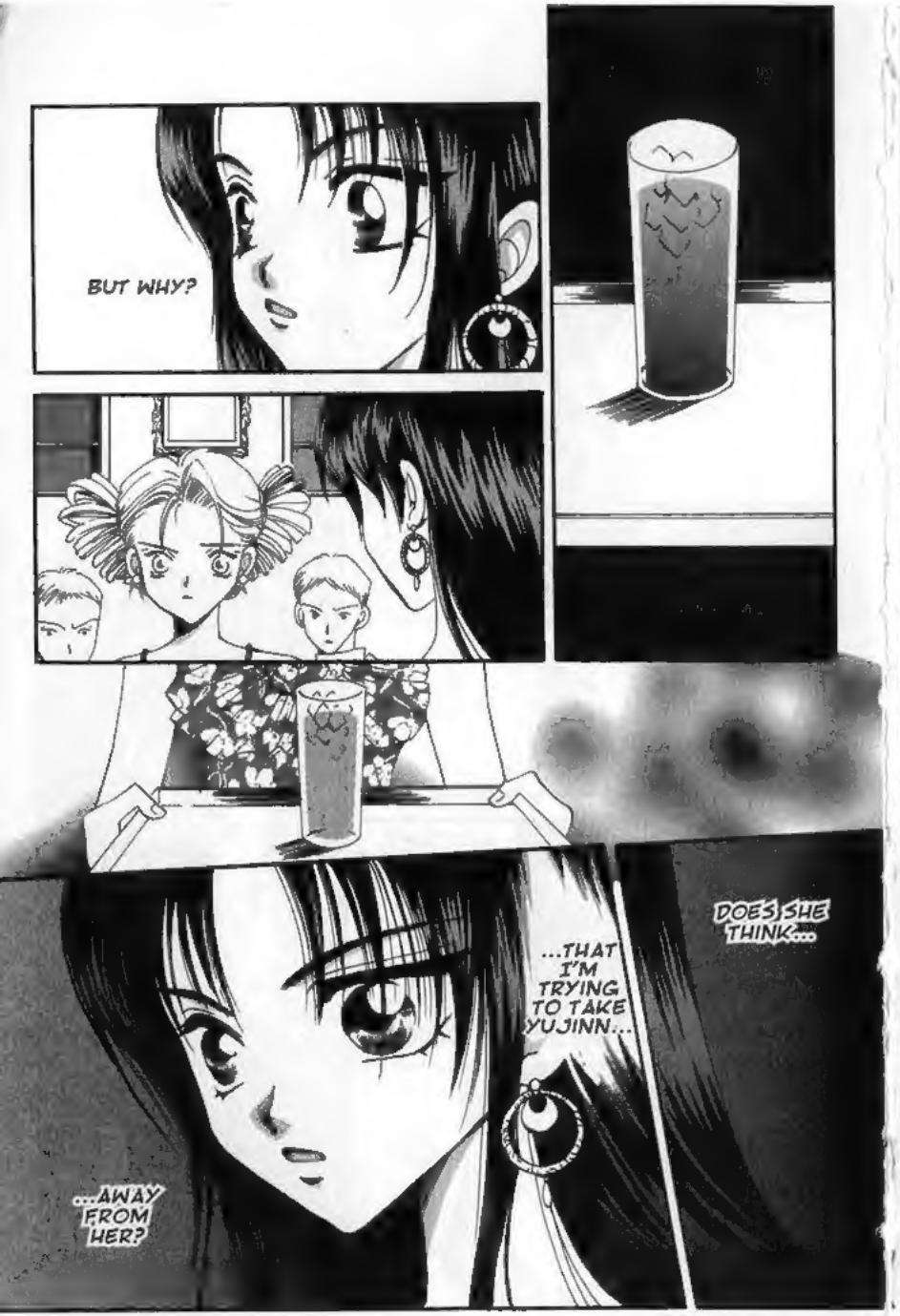
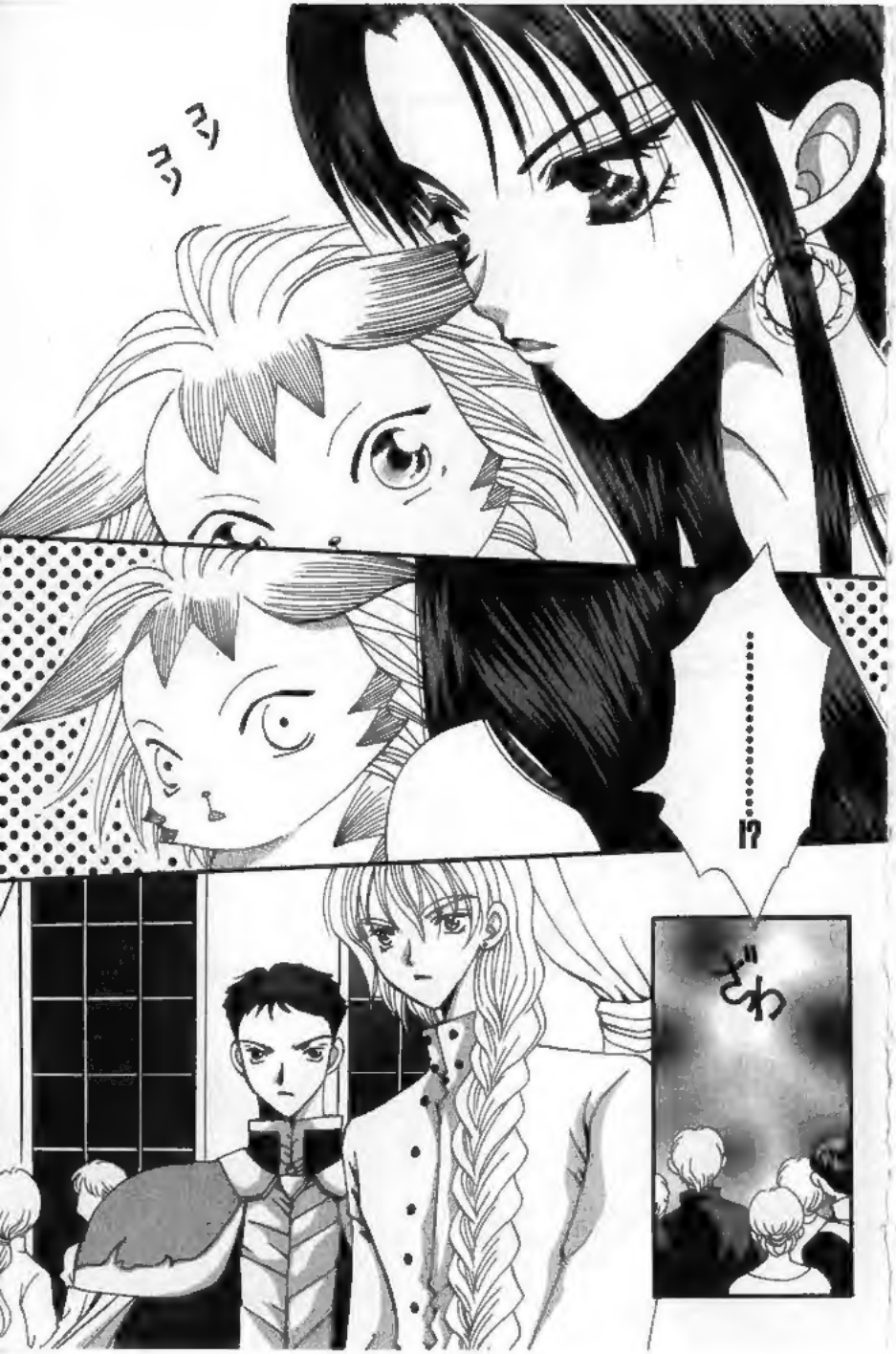

BUT WHY?
DOES SHE THINK...
...THAT I'M TRYING TO TAKE YUJINN...
...AWAY FROM HER?

LEENE?
吸血遊戯
ゼ・アルプ
南領篇
Act.16


ﾆｰ ﾆｰ
.....!?
ざわ

...THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT SHE MIGHT DO TO KEEP HIM HERE.
IF THEY REALLY HAD A SUICIDE PACT...
Gasp! Treason!
...IF SHE REALLY WANTS TO GET RID OF ME...
BUT...
...I CAN'T THINK OF A STUPIDER WAY TO DO IT!
...I NEED A FAVOR.
HEY, DUZIE...

ASHLEY!
DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT IT.

ざわ
WHAT'S GOING ON?
.....

...YOU'RE MAKING A FOOL OF MY MOTHER, WHO TRUSTED YOU WHEN NO ONE ELSE DID.
...AND THE MINISTER OF MILITARY STRATEGY.
YOU'RE A GENERAL NOW...
IF YOU DO THIS, YOU'RE NOT JUST SACRIFICING YOURSELF...
STOP AND THINK ABOUT THAT.
HOWEVER, THERE'S SOMETHING YOU DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT POISON...
I'M SORRY, YUJINN.

I KNOW HOW MUCH YOU LOVE HER, BUT DON'T BE FOOLISH.
...YOU'LL BE BETRAYING MY MOTHER'S TRUST...
SHE GOT HERSELF INTO THIS. AND IF YOU TRY...
...TO TAKE THE FALL FOR HER...
.....!
...AND THE TRUST OF YOUR PEOPLE.

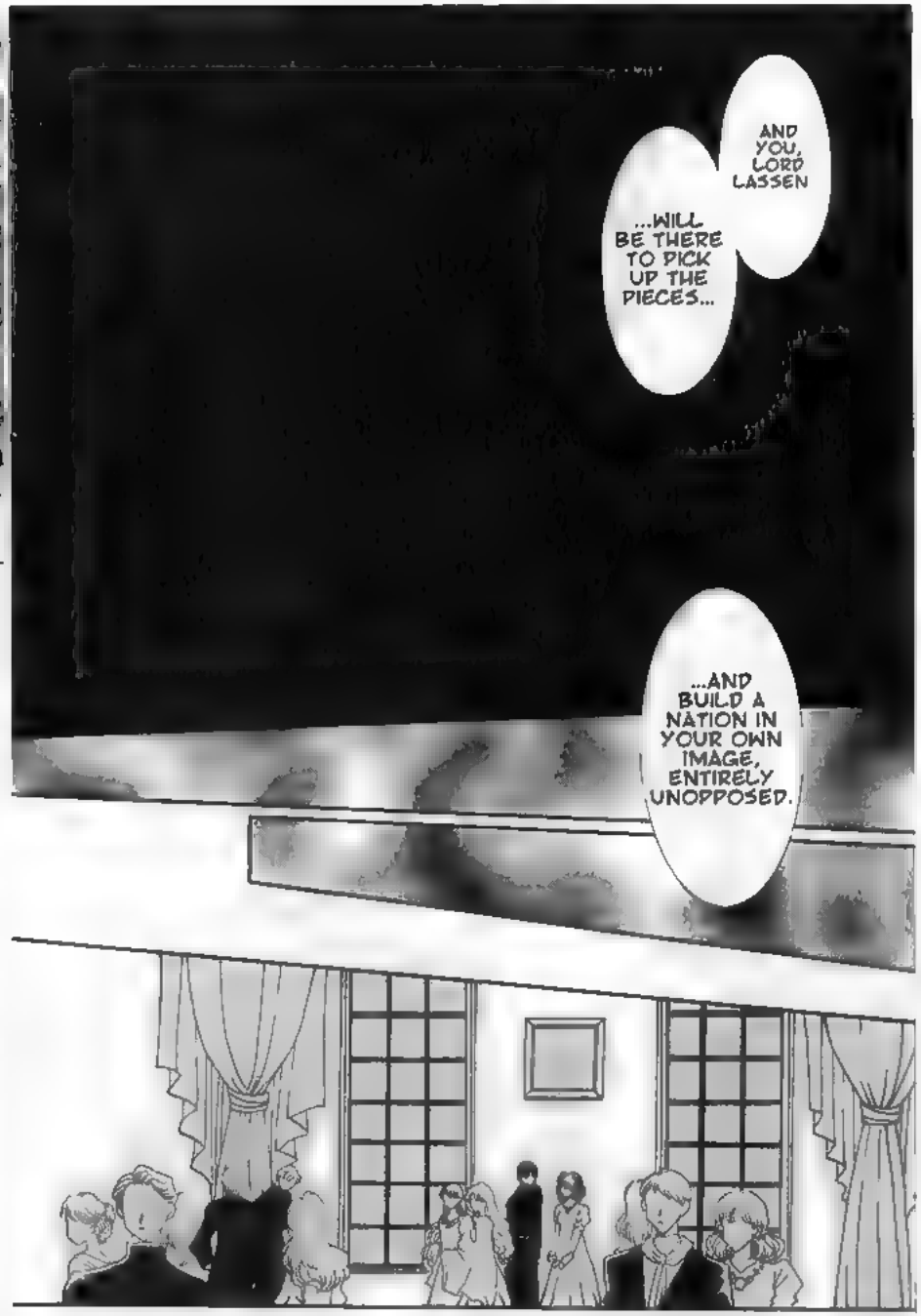
WHAT THE DEVIL ARE YOU THINKING, SHARLEN? WE HAD THE PERFECT PLAN, AND YOU TOSSED IT AWAY FOR THIS... THIS...
...THIS FARCE!
ISHTAR...

.....!?
...BUT WHO KNEW THIS ONE WOULD BE SO MUCH FUN? I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS NEXT!
Hee! Hee!
THIS IS PATHETIC.
LORD LASSEN...
...POISONINGS ARE ALWAYS ENTERTAINING...

AFTER A FEW TOO MANY OF ISHTAR'S FOOD TASTERS DIED MURMURING SOMETHING ALONG THE LINES OF "URK... ARSENIC..."
A FARCE, LORD LASSEN? WELL, LET ME TELL YOU WHAT'S NOT A FARCE.
...THE PRINCESS CHOSE TO STOP PUTTING INNOCENT LIVES AT RISK, AND BEGAN BUILDING UP TOLERANCES TO EVERY KNOWN TOXIN.
AT THIS POINT, A NIGHT-SHADE SALAD WOULDN'T EVEN GIVE HER A STOMACH-ACHE.
WELCOME HOME...
...LORD SHARLEN.
WE MISSED YOU.

.....
SERIOUSLY, LASSEN.
...YOU NEEDN'T HAVE BOTHERED WITH ALL THIS.
A THREATEN-ING NOTE WOULD HAVE DONE THE TRICK
...BY MISTRUST AND TREACHERY...
ONCE ITS FOUNDATION HAS BEEN UNDER-MINED...
...IT WILL COLLAPSE UNDER ITS OWN WEIGHT.
WE MUST NOT FOR-GET...
THAT OUR GOAL IS TO BRING DOWN THE HOUSE OF PHELIOS

YOUR POISON MIGHT HAVE SENT HER TO BED EARLY. NOTHING MORE.
IS THAT SO?
THEN WHY DIDN'T WE HAVE THIS DISCUS-SION EARLIER?
ALL THAT MATTERS IS THAT SOMEONE CLOSE TO HER...
BECAUSE ...WHETHER THE PRINCESS LIVES OR DIES IS IRRELEVANT.
NOW SHE'LL SUSPECT EVERYONE.
...AND CLOSE TO ZI ALDA, TRIED TO MURDER HER.


AND YOU, LORD LASSEN
...WILL BE THERE TO PICK UP THE PIECES...
...AND BUILD A NATION IN YOUR OWN IMAGE, ENTIRELY UNOPPOSED.

.....
DUZIE, I'M GONNA DRINK IT. IF IT'S POISONED
...I NEED YOU TO QUICKLY COME UP WITH A SPELL TO COUNTERACT IT.

ISHTAR, NO!!!

ISHTAR...?
ISHTAR!!
ごくっ

PRINCESS ISHTAR?
CRANBERRY! MY FAVORITE!

!
BOY, THAT HIT THE SPOT! THIS WARM COUNTRY AIR SURE DOES MAKE A GUY THIRSTY!
NEVER HAD A BETTER GLASS OF JUICE IN MY LIFE! HA HA!
Poison, pshaw! What a kidder
ゴクン

HA HA HA HA!
HA HA HA HA!
HA HA HA HA!
.....
TOTAL BODY COUNT
GOOD WORK, SHARLEN!
< .ZERO!

どわっ
DARRES!
.....

LEVEL OF MIS-TRUST... ALSO ZERO!
I'VE SEEN CHILDREN'S THEATER WITH FAR MORE SINISTER PLOTS.
AD-LIB MY ORDERS AGAIN...
...AND IT'LL BE YOUR FINAL PERFOR-MANCE.
バッ

WHY ISN'T THE POISON WORKING ON HIM? IS HE IMMUNE, TOO?
THAT MAN MUST BE CHARMED
...BECAUSE ANY TIME HE CROSSES MY PATH, MY PLAN STARTS TO UNRAVEL.

DARRES!
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
I'M FINE. DID YOU SEE WHICH WAY THAT LADY IN BLACK WENT?
WHY WOULDN'T I BE?
ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE OKAY?
NEED A HAND?

PRINCESS, YOU DON'T REALLY BELIEVE THAT LADY LEENE...
...WOULD TRY KILLING YOU, DO YOU?
THEY HANG PEOPLE FOR THAT, YOU KNOW.
DON'T WORRY, LEENE IF ANYTHING HAPPENS TO DARRES, YOU WON'T SWING...

"...I'LL KILL YOU MYSELF."
"IF ANYTHING HAPPENS TO DARRES..."
LEENE, MY DEAR, YOU ARE AN IDIOT.
...I'LL KILL YOU MYSELF.
!?

吸血遊戯
前編
Act.17

……
ポン

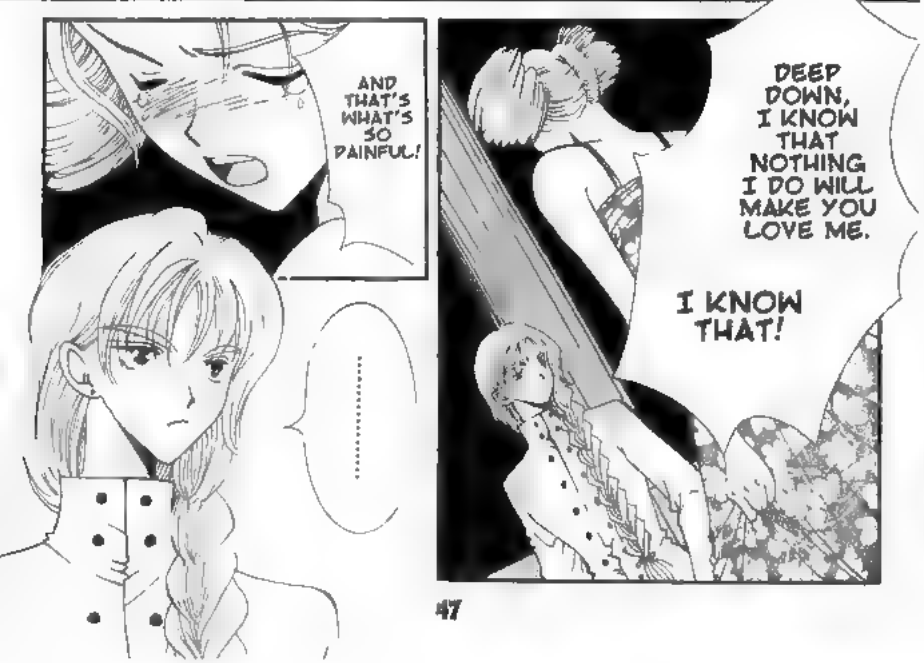
吸血遊戯
南領篇
Act.17

THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
I GUESS THAT'S WHY HE'S THE MINISTER OF MILITARY STRATEGY.
HE REPLACED YOUR POISON PILLS WITH SOME DELIGHTFUL CANDY FAKES.
NO, REALLY...
...HE GAVE ME THE EXTRAS. THEY WERE DELICIOUS.
AS USUAL, ASHLEY WAS TWO MOVES AHEAD OF EVERY-ONE ELSE.
.....!?

I...
...LET HIM DOWN.
TO PUT IT MILDLY.
SELFISH GIRL. ONE OF THESE DAYS, I REALLY HOPE YOU OPEN YOUR EYES.

ASHLEY WANTED TO BELIEVE YOUR BETTER NATURE WOULD COME THROUGH..
...AND YOU'D REALIZE HOW UTTERLY INSANE YOUR PLAN WAS
SO HE CUT YOU A FAIR AMOUNT OF SLACK. JUST ENOUGH TO HANG YOURSELF WITH, APPARENTLY.
.....

I...
...ALSO KNOW THAT GETTING RID OF THE PEOPLE YOU LOVE...
...WON'T MAKE ANY MORE ROOM IN YOUR HEART FOR ME.
BUT THAT DIDN'T STOP ME FROM TRYING.


DEEP DOWN, I KNOW THAT NOTHING I DO WILL MAKE YOU LOVE ME.
I KNOW THAT!
AND THAT'S WHAT'S SO PAINFUL!
.....

I KNOW.
THEN MAYBE...
.YOU'D REALIZE THAT ASHLEY LOVES YOU...
...A HELL OF A LOT MORE THAN YOU LOVE ME.

I'M SORRY.
WILL YOU JUST TELL ME ONE THING?
DO YOU LOVE LADY ISHTAR?
.....?
.....!?

I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN.
I THINK I LOVE HER, TOO.
BUT SOMETHING INSIDE ME JUST GOES COLD...
...WHEN I THINK ABOUT HOW KELD TRIED FORCING ME TO MARRY YUJINN.
Think that qualifies as child abuse?
A few weeks later
IT'S NOT THAT I DON'T LOVE YUJINN OR AUNT SONIA.

...YES, I LOVE HER.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT LOVE MEANS TO YOU...
...OR TO ME, FOR THAT MATTER, BUT...

LET'S SEE...
"...LADY SONIA IS FEELING MUCH BETTER..."
"...TO ATTEND YOUR FAREWELL PARTY."
"...AND REGRETS THAT SHE WAS UNABLE..."
.....
KNOW WHAT I MEAN, DUZIE?
コン コン
A LETTER FROM ZI ALDA?
DUZIE, IT'S FROM LEENE!
IS IT TICKING?

OH, LEENE...
"YUUJEL'S BEEN HELPING HER TAKE CARE OF ALL HER OFFICIAL DUTIES."
"QUITE DASHINGLY, I MIGHT ADD."
"ONCE AGAIN, I WANTED TO APOLOGIZE FOR ALL THE PAIN I CAUSED YOU."
"BUT MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE, I'M SORRY FOR MAKING YOU WORRY ABOUT DARRES."
.....
DUZIE, THERE'S A POST-SCRIPT!
!!
"PLEASE ACCEPT THIS LOVE POTION AS MY WAY OF THANKING YOU..."
"...FOR NOT PRESSING CHARGES."

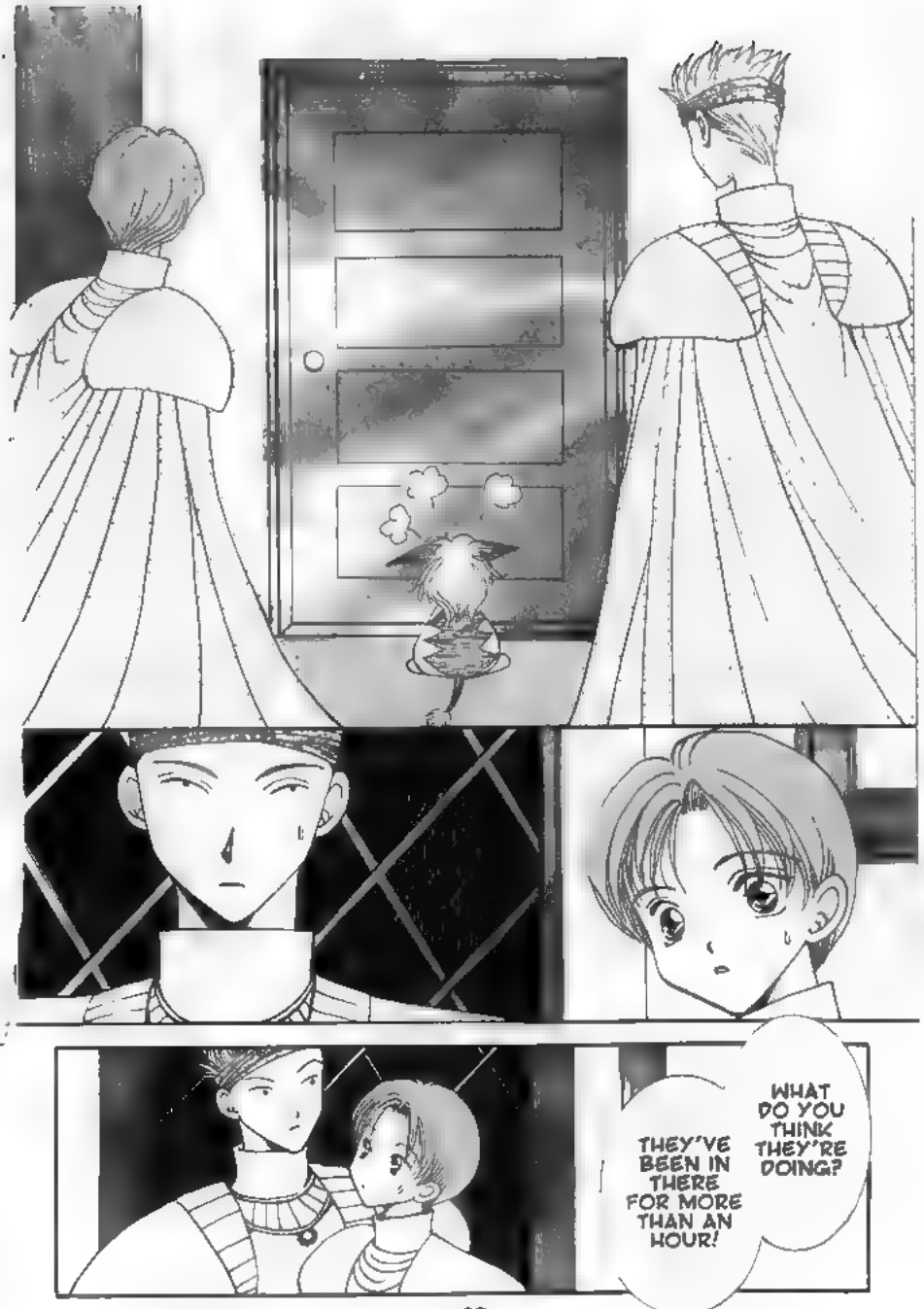
WHAAAAT?!

"IF YOU DRINK THIS MAGIC ELIXIR WITH THE ONE YOU LOVE..."
"...YOUR HEARTS WILL BE FOREVER JOINED."

YOU'LL SEE.
LIKE WHAT?
KNOWING ISHTAR, I WOULDN'T BE SURPRISED IF SHE THOUGHT IT WAS A JOKE...
DO YOU THINK SHE'LL ..
...ACTUALLY USE IT?
...AND...
...DECIDED TO DRINK IT WITH HER CAT OR SOMETHING..
I...
...DIDN'T EXPECT YOU TO HELP ME..
...GET DARRES AND ISHTAR TOGETHER AFTER ALL, MY PLANS DO HAVE A WAY OF BACKFIRING.
OR IS THAT WHAT YOU WERE HOPING?
NO.
I HAVE MY OWN REASONS.

DON'T WORRY LADY ISHTAR HAS AN UNHEALTHY CAPACITY FOR FOR-GIVENESS

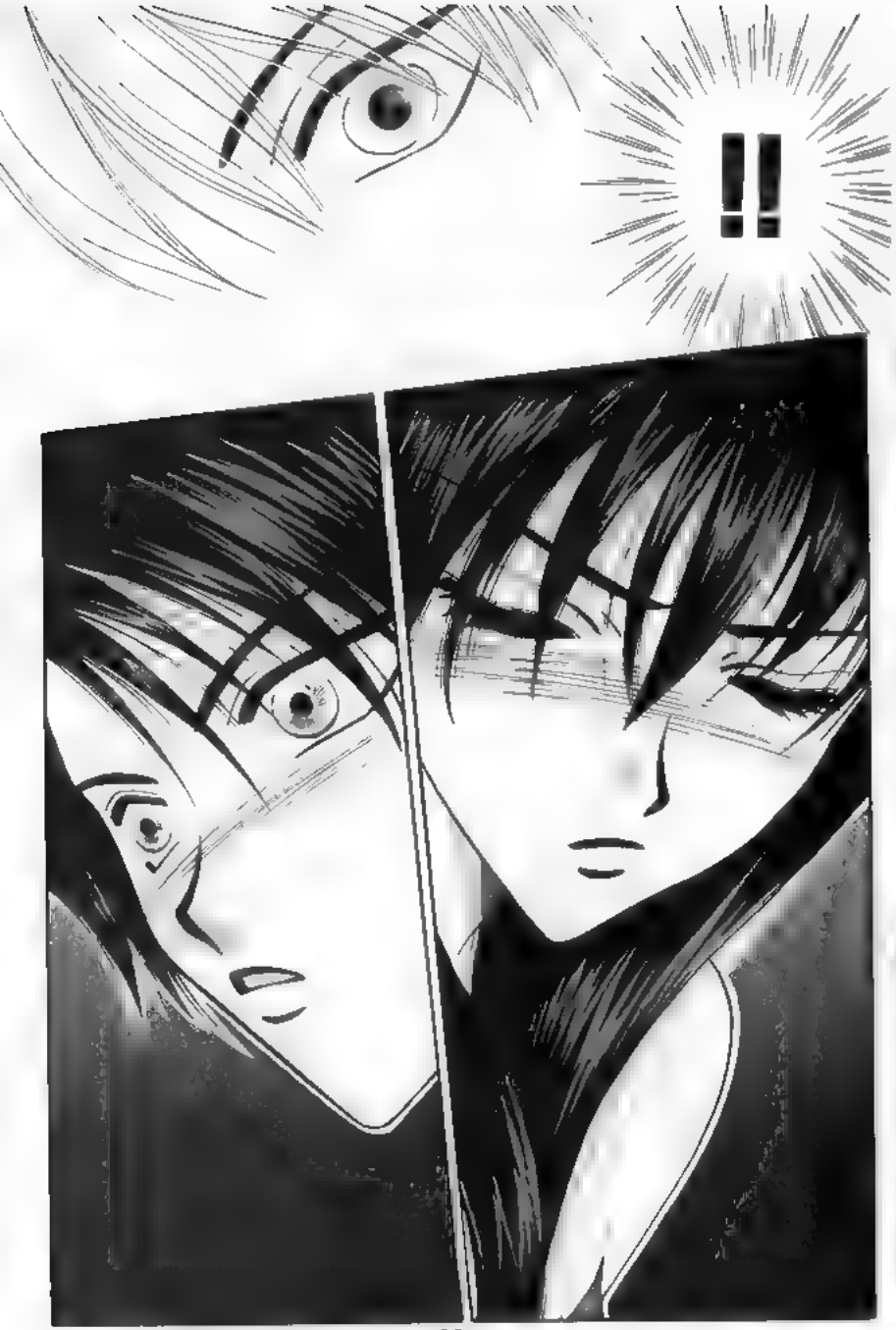
WELL, JILL, I CAN THINK OF SEVERAL THINGS. BUT NOTHING THAT CAN BE DISCUSSED IN FRONT OF THE CAT.


WHAT DO YOU THINK THEY'RE DOING?
THEY'VE BEEN IN THERE FOR MORE THAN AN HOUR!

WHAT?
WHISKEY?
THAT LYING BITCH!

ARE WE CELE-BRATING SOME-THING?
I ONLY ASK BECAUSE CHEAP WHISKEY BEFORE NOON IS A BAD HABIT FOR A PRINCESS.
WHERE'D YOU GET THIS ROTGUT ANYWAYS?
STUFF TASTES LIKE LAMP OIL.

"LIKE SOME STUPID ELIXIR COULD REALLY MAKE YOU FALL IN LOVE WITH ME!"
I THINK THIS CRAP MAY BE GOING TO MY HEAD...
WAIT A SECOND ...!
I LOVE YOU, DARRES.
I'M SUCH AN IDIOT!!
LIKE SOME STUPID ELIXIR COULD REALLY MAKE YOU FALL IN LOVE WITH ME!
I CAN'T BELIEVE I FELL FOR THAT CRAP! MAGIC POTION MY ASS!
SOMEONE TOLD YOU THIS WAS A LOVE POTION?
Heh heh heh!
YOU DIDN'T ACTUALLY PAY MONEY FOR IT, DID YOU?

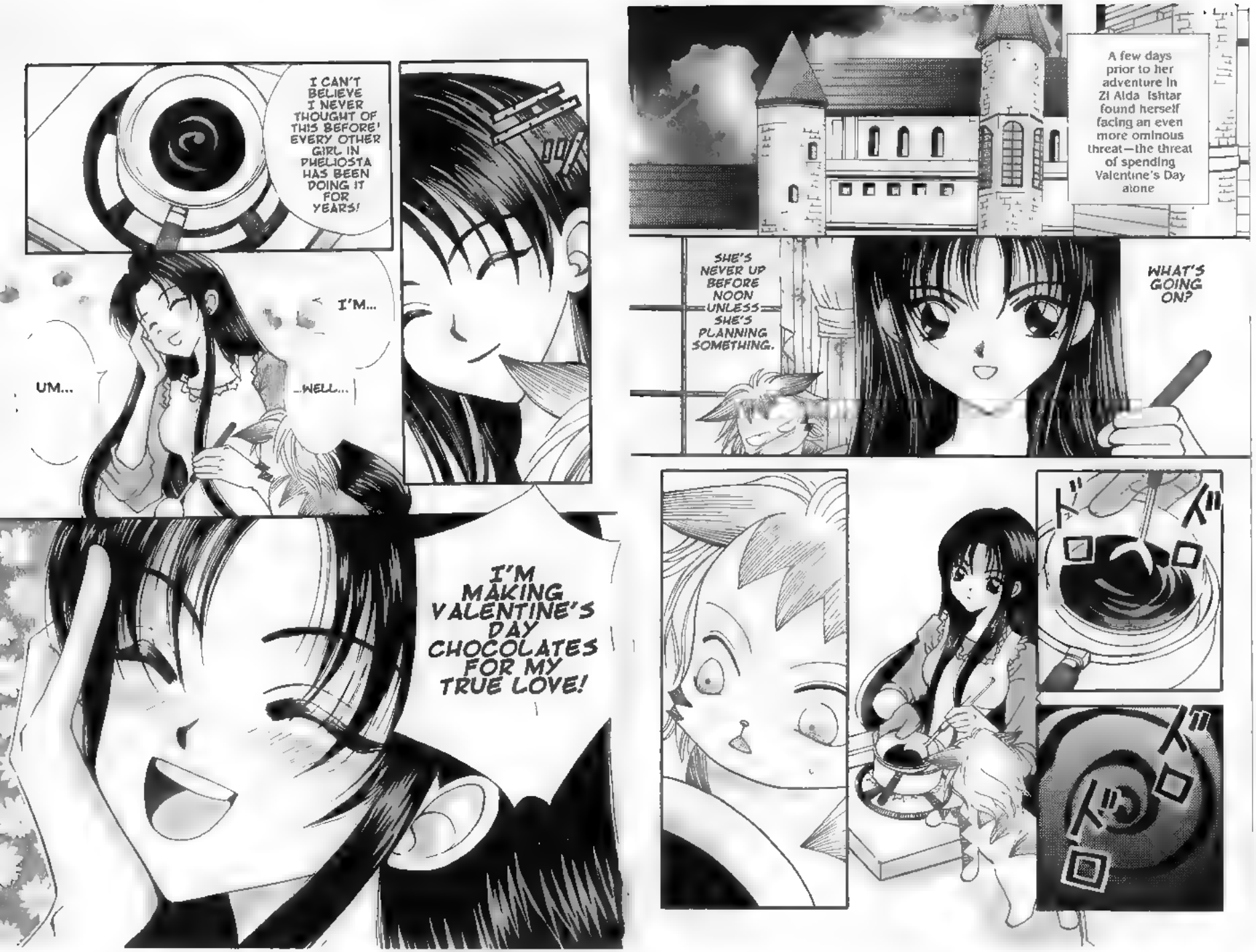

!!

!?
I'VE LOVED YOU...
...SINCE I WAS A LITTLE GIRL. AND I HAVEN'T STOPPED LOVING YOU. NOT FOR A MINUTE.

Vampire Game - Side Story

And On Valentine's Day...

南領篇 FIN

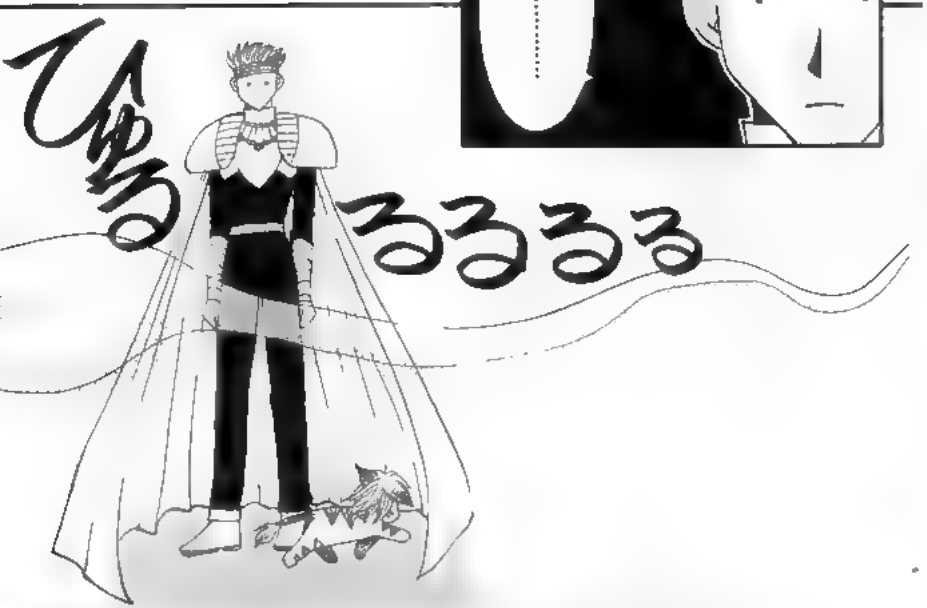

A few days prior to her adventure in Zi Alda Ishtar found herself facing an even more ominous threat—the threat of spending Valentine's Day alone
SHE'S NEVER UP BEFORE NOON UNLESS SHE'S PLANNING SOMETHING.
WHAT'S GOING ON?
I CAN'T BELIEVE I NEVER THOUGHT OF THIS BEFORE! EVERY OTHER GIRL IN PHELIOSTA HAS BEEN DOING IT FOR YEARS!
UM...
I'M...
...WELL...
I'M MAKING VALENTINE'S DAY CHOCOLATES FOR MY TRUE LOVE!

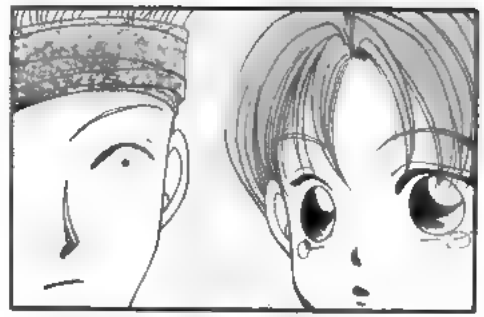
I DIDN'T GET ANYTHING LAST YEAR! NO CANDY, NO CARD... NOTHING!
WHY NOT? MAROA TOO CHEAP TO SPRING FOR SOME CHOCO-LATES?
うぁん
THAT'S NOT IT. SHE SAYS SHE'S NOT GOING TO LET SOME CHOCOLATE COMPANY...
...TELL HER HOW TO EXPRESS HER LOVE. APPARENTLY, IT'S SYMPTOMATIC OF THE PATRIARCHY. IT'S NOT THAT I DON'T SUPPORT HER COMMITMENT TO CULTURAL REFORM...
but everyone else gets some!
I'M RIGHT THERE WITH YOU, BROTHER.
うぁーん
コト

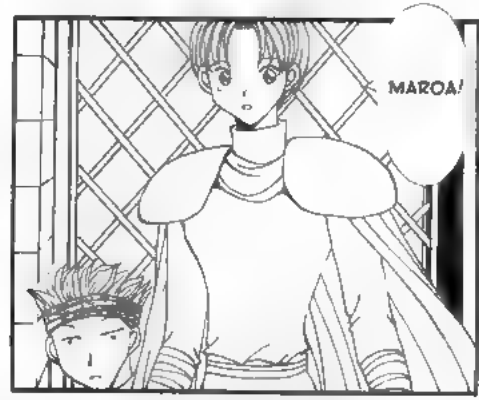
Jill's Valentine...

(Don't worry, it doesn't involve zombies...)

Krai's Valentine
(or lack thereof)...







DESPITE THE OPPRESSION INHERENT IN GENDER-SPECIFIC GIFT-GIVING RITUALS AND THE UNDERLYING EMOTIONAL EXPLOITATION BY THE CONFECTION-ARY ESTABLISH-MENT--

きゃあ
きゃあ
And as for Yujinn, well...
きゃあ
きゃあ
きゃあ
NO, MINE!
THESE ARE MY OWN SPECIAL RECIPE! THEY'LL MELT IN YOUR MOUTH, I PROMISE!
TRY MINE FIRST!
UH... EXCUSE ME...
ダッ
ダッ
ダッ
ダッ
I MADE THESE FOR YOU! HOPE YOU LIKE 'EM! BYE!
きゃあ
きゃあ
きゃあ
きゃあ
.....

..FOR BEING SO KIND TO ME OVER THE YEARS.
CONSIDER IT A THANK YOU...
I MADE IT MYSELF. JUST FOR YOU.
OH... UH... I SUPPOSE NOT.
Great, even little old ladies know how pathetic my love life is.
Ugh
Ugh

Darres' Valentine...
!!
IT'S VALENTINE'S DAY YOU DON'T WANT ALL YOUR GIFTS TO COME FROM OLD LADIES NOW, DO YOU?
SIR DARRES, WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO FIND YOURSELF A NICE GIRL?

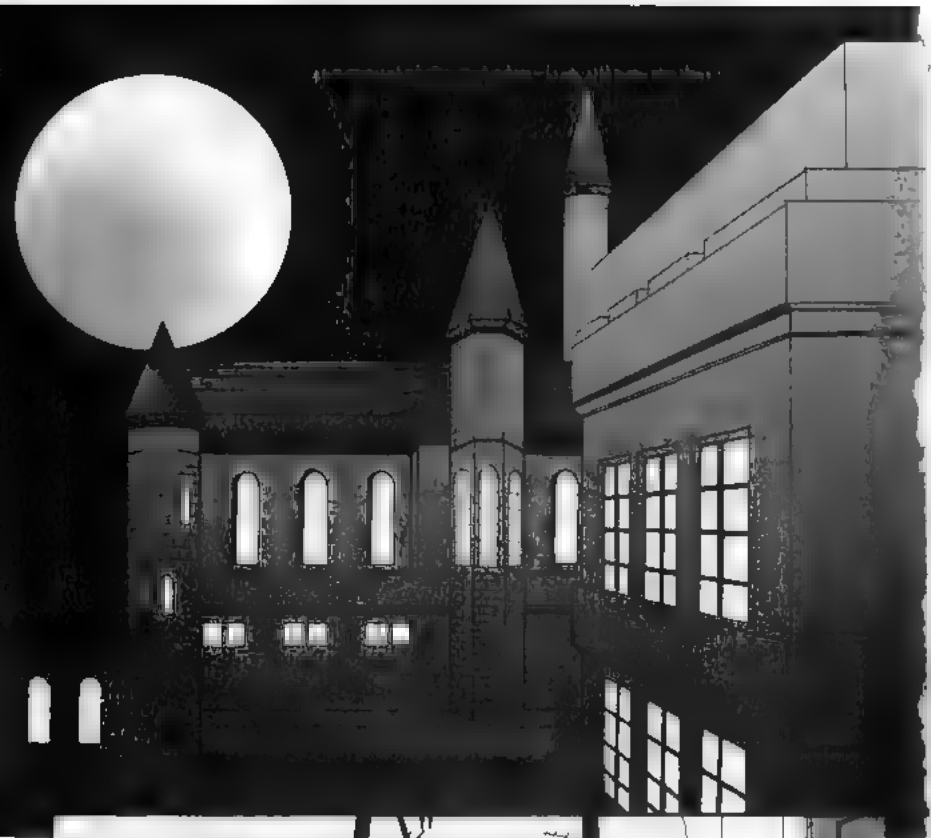
ANYHOW, I MELTED DOWN THE CHOCOLATES I MADE...
...AND MADE US SOME HOT COCOA.
I'D RATHER SHARE THE CHOCO-LATES WITH YOU, DUZIE...
--THAN SEE THEM TOSSED IN A BOX WITH SOME OTHER SWEETIE'S SWEETS.

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!
YEAR AFTER YEAR, DARRES HAS ALWAYS SENT WHATEVER VALENTINE'S CHOCOLATE HE RECEIVED TO THE ORPHANAGE!
BUT THIS YEAR, HE'S KEEPING SOME!
THEY'RE IN A BIG RED BOX! WITH A BOW AND EVERYTHING!
WHO GAVE IT TO HIM?
WHICH SKANK DO I GET TO SPANK?!

I CARE ABOUT YOU.
AND THERE AREN'T REALLY MANY THINGS THAT I CAN CHERISH IN MY LIFE.
吸血遊戯
光輪編
Act.1

ドン
I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN.
...WITH A HINT OF BITTER-NESS.
I'D NEVER TASTED CHOCOLATE BEFORE.
IT WAS INCREDIBLY SWEET...
FIN

吸血遊戯
北領篇（ミル・ケイ）
Act.1



I LOVE YOU MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE IN THE WORLD.

I LOVE YOU MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE IN THE WORLD...
I THOUGHT SHE WAS JOKING...
..BUT SHE PASSED OUT RIGHT AFTER SHE SAID IT.
AND WHEN SHE CAME TO, SHE COULDN'T REMEMBER ANYTHING THAT SHE HAD SAID.

...WAS THAT ALL ABOUT?
WHAT THE HELL...

WE WERE TALKING ABOUT ISHTAR'S BIRTHDAY PARTY NEXT WEEK. CAN YOU BELIEVE SHE'S TURNING 16?
YEAH, GOD KNOWS THAT KRAI HAS NO BUSINESS TALKING ABOUT THAT.
RELAX, CAPTAIN!
WE'RE NOT TALKING ABOUT MATURITY HERE.
IT MUST'VE SLIPPED MY MIND.
IT SEEMS LIKE ONLY YESTERDAY.
しみじみ
にぱっ
ISHTAR'S 16 ALREADY? I REMEMBER WHEN SHE WAS STILL A LITTLE GIRL.

ぱふー
GROWN UP? ARE YOU NUTS, KRAI?
DON'T YOU REMEMBER THE BAR IN ZI ALDA? OR THE--
Don't answer that.
WE'LL HAVE TO WATCH HER AROUND THE LAMP OIL...
I WONDER HOW LONG THE PRINCESS HAS BEEN DRINKING.
SO...
...NOW THAT PRINCESS ISHTAR HAS GROWN UP--
コホン
AHEM!

I'M AFRAID WE'VE RECEIVED SOME BAD NEWS FROM ZI ALDA
I...

GOD, HE'S STARTING TO SOUND LIKE THE OLD FART...

SIR KELD? WHAT'S WRONG?

DARRES!

?

I WANTED TO THANK YOU, DUZELL.
!!
AUNT SONIA...
...IS DEAD.
.....
WHY ARE YOU THANKING ME?!
I GAVE YOU MY WORD THAT I'D TAKE CARE OF HER AND I FAILED!
I WASN'T A VERY GOOD DOCTOR! SHE'S DEAD!
WHAT FOR?!

WHAT A RICH LIFE. SHE MUST BE SO CONTENT...
ISHTAR!
SHE'S DEAD!
HOW CAN SHE POSSIBLY BE HAPPY?!

トン
トン
YOUR MAJESTY! A MESSAGE FROM SIR KELD!

BECAUSE YOU DID WHAT YOU COULD.
BECAUSE ...
...YOU CARED.
SHE TOUCHED SO MANY OF US. AND WE ALL LOVED HER SO MUCH.

I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT IT...

WHAT...?
...AND I WANT TO DIE PROTECTING THE ONES I LOVE JUST LIKE MY GREAT-GRAND-FATHER, ST. PHELIOS.

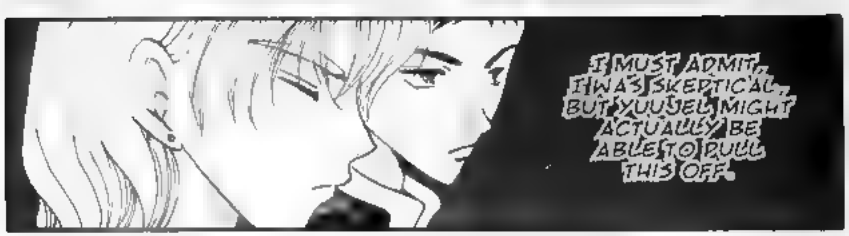
YOU EXPECT US TO BELIEVE THAT LADY SONIA HAD ANOTHER CHILD? A SON?
WHY HAVEN'T WE SEEN HIM?

WHY HIDE HIM AWAY?

Zl Alda
...THERE YOU HAVE IT. A DYING WOMAN'S FINAL WISH TO MAKE AMENDS.

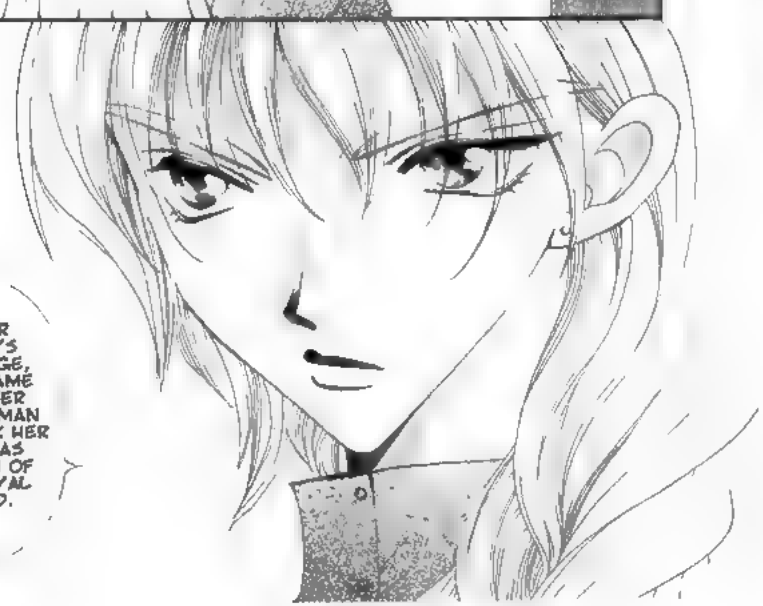
DOES HE EVEN CARE THAT HE'S DRAGGING HIS DEAD MOTHER'S NAME THROUGH THE MUD?
...AND FOLLOWED IN HIS ADOPTED MOTHER'S FOOTSTEPS, JOINING HER MAJESTY'S ROYAL GUARD.
MY HALF-BROTHER WAS THEN ADOPTED BY...
...CAPTAIN SELEN OF PHELIOSTA...
THE CAPTAIN SELEN?

I KNOW THIS COMES AS A SHOCK TO MOST OF YOU, BUT MY MOTHER WAS HUMAN.
I ASSURE YOU, IT'S THE TRUTH.
BEFORE MEETING MY FATHER, SHE HAD AN... INDISCRE-TION.
THE LIES SPILL OFF HIS TONGUE SO CASUALLY, WITHOUT THE SLIGHTEST TRACE OF REMORSE.
.....



ALL THE ARISTOCRATS CARE ABOUT IS WHERE THEY'LL STAND WITH THIS NEW PRINCE.

IF YUUJEL CONVINCES THEM THEY CAN PROFIT BY SUPPORTING HIS HALF-BROTHER...



I WONDER WHY I NEVER SAW IT BEFORE.
YUUJEL HAS NO NEED TO WIN ISHTAR'S HAND.
NOT WHEN HE'S MORE THAN CAPABLE OF CONNING HIS WAY TO THE THRONE.
...THE DEEP LOVE THAT EXISTED BETWEEN MY BROTHER, DARRES...

MY MOTHER PLANNED TO TAKE THIS SECRET TO HER GRAVE.
NOW...
...THIS ISN'T TO LEAVE THE ROOM.
BUT WHEN SHE SAW...

Phellosta Castle
Hmm...
GASP!!
...AND HER MAJESTY, PRINCESS ISHTAR, SHE KNEW SHE COULDN'T STAND IN THE WAY OF FATE.

I COULDN'T SAY WHY...

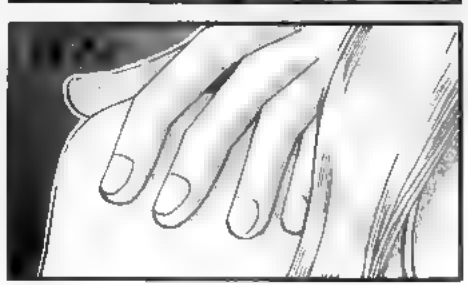
...BUT ISHTAR'S REALLY STARTING TO REMIND ME OF PHELIOS.
IT'S NOT A PHYSICAL RESEMBLANCE. THEY LOOK NOTHING ALIKE.
SO, THEN... WHAT IS IT?
SHE'S NOT HIS REINCARNATION.
I MADE SURE OF THAT WHEN WE FIRST MET.
.....

吸血遊戯
北領篇
Act.2

Kingdom of La Naan
SONIA HAD ANOTHER SON?!
SON OF A BITCH!
Quite literally, in this case!
IF SHE HAD GOTTEN PREGNANT, I WOULD HAVE KNOWN!
THIS CAN'T BE RIGHT!
.....
WE LIVED TOGETH-ER...
...UNTIL SHE WAS MARRIED! WE WERE SO CLOSE!

NO!
I WON'T TAKE THIS LYING DOWN. IF IT MEANS LEVELING THE CAPITAL, SO BE IT! BOYS, GET DRESSED! TONIGHT, WE RIDE FOR PHELIOSTA, AND WE'LL BE CARRYING THE FLAGS OF WAR!

THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU'RE SAYING!
MOM, YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS!

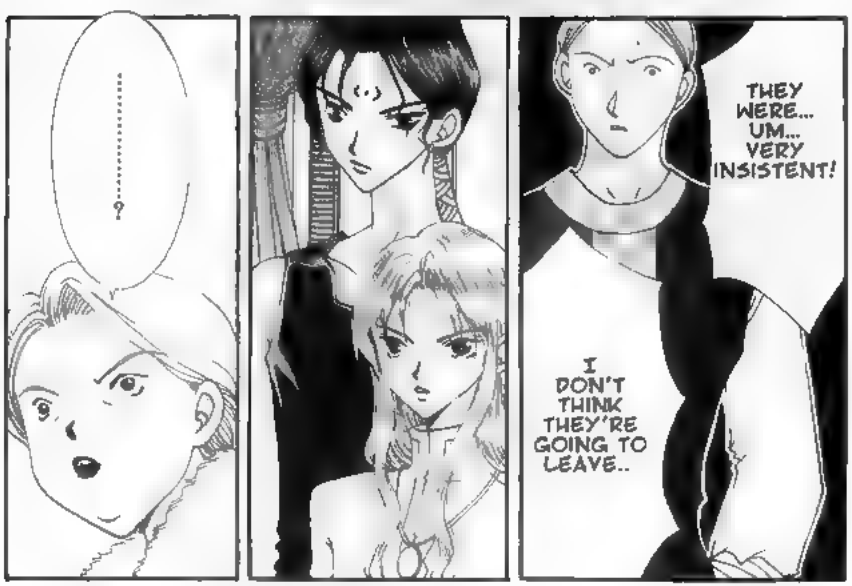


LADY RAMIA
MOTHER...
...IT'S A JOINT PROCLAMATION FROM ZI ALDA AND PHELIOSTA. WHETHER OR NOT IT'S TRUE IS IRRELEVANT.
SONIA, YOU TRIED SCOOPING THE THRONE OUT FROM UNDER ME BEFORE! IF YOUR SON WASN'T SUCH A LUNKHEAD, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN YOURS!
I KNOW THAT!
FIGURES YOU COULDN'T RESIST ONE LAST ATTEMPT.
WHAT I'D LIKE TO KNOW IS WHO'S BEHIND IT!
HMM...

I'M DOING THIS FOR YOU, BOYS...
YUUJEL...
...THIS HAS YOUR FINGER-PRINTS ALL OVER IT.
YOU WOULDN'T COOPERATE WHEN SONIA ARRANGED FOR YOU TO MARRY THE PRINCESS...

...AND BECOME KING. BUT MAYBE THAT'S NOT THE BEST THING FOR PHELIOSTA.
PLEASE!
MOTHER ...
...I KNOW YOU ALWAYS WANTED ONE OF US TO MARRY THE PRINCESS...
AND HAVING THIS BASTARD ON THE THRONE IS?!
WHETHER HE ACTUALLY IS PART OF THE BLOOD-LINE OR NOT, I WILL NOT BOW TO ONE SO IMPURE.

WHAT?
LADY RAMIA!
HASN'T YUUJEL DONE ENOUGH? SEND THEM AWAY!
A DELEGATION FROM ZI ALDA HAS JUST ARRIVED! THEY WISH TO SPEAK WITH YOU. THEY SAY IT'S A MATTER OF GREAT IMPORTANCE!
TELL THEM IF THEIR LORD WISHES TO SMOOTH THINGS OVER, HE CAN BLOODY WELL COME HIMSELF!


.....?
THEY WERE... UM... VERY INSISTENT!
I DON'T THINK THEY'RE GOING TO LEAVE..

...BUT NOW THAT SHE'S DEAD, YOU TOSS TOGETHER SOME LAUGHABLE STORY ABOUT A HALF-BROTHER AND THROW THE ENTIRE KINGDOM INTO AN UPROAR!
ACTUALLY, MOM, THE KINGDOM ISN'T IN AN UPROAR... JUST YOU.

Kingdom of Ci Xeneth
SO ASHLEY DROPPED BY...
...AND THREATENED TO MAKE OUR PEDIGREES PUBLIC?

...LADY SONIA'S FINAL REQUEST.
OKAY...
...NOW I GET IT.
BUT IT DOESN'T REALLY CHANGE ANYTHING.
YUUJEL CAN COME UP WITH AS MANY EXTRA BROTHERS AS HE LIKES.
THAT WON'T GET HIM ANY CLOSER TO CALLING THE PRINCESS HIS SISTER.

OH, MAN, THAT IS TOO MUCH!
I WISH I COULD'VE BEEN THERE. HOW DID MOM REACT? DID SHE TURN PURPLE AND DO THAT STUTTERING THING SHE ALWAYS DOES WHEN SHE'S ANGRY? COME ON, LAPHIJI, I WANT DETAILS!
REGARDLESS OF HIS METHODS, HIS POINT IS VALID. THIS IS THE BEST THING FOR THE NATION.
SHE DIDN'T STUTTER, BUT SHE DEFINITELY WASN'T HAPPY.
THIS IS...
AND IT'S WHAT AUNT SONIA WANTED.
WHAT?

COULD HE...?
WAIT A MINUTE...
WHAT?!
AND IF ISHTAR REALLY DOES LOVE HIM...
BUT IT DOESN'T TAKE A DETECTIVE TO FIGURE IT OUT.
ASHLEY DIDN'T MENTION OUR NEW COUSIN'S NAME.
!?
HAS SEILIEZ BEEN LISTENING IN THE WHOLE TIME?
I WOULDN'T BE SO SURE OF THAT... ...MY BROTHER.
THE OFFICIAL WORD FROM ASHLEY...
...IS THAT SONIA'S BASTARD SON AND THE PRINCESS...
...ARE IN LOVE.

...AS THE RIGHTFUL KING OF PHELIOSTA.
I WILL SERVE HIM...
...THEN I HAVE NO OBJECTION TO THIS UNION.
FOR THE SAKE OF OUR PRINCESS.
.....
WELL, I'LL DO SOME SNOOPING...
...AND GET BACK TO YOU IF I FIND ANYTHING OUT
BUT IS DARRES IN LOVE WITH ISHTAR?
IF IT'S DARRES THAT WE'RE TALKING ABOUT, I HAVE NO DOUBT THE PRINCESS IS IN LOVE WITH HIM
I MEAN, SHE'S ALWAYS GIVING HIM THOSE GOOGLY EYES. IT'S PRETTY DAMN OBVIOUS.
LET ME TALK TO LAPHIJI FOR A MINUTE, SEILIEZ.
?
...IF I WERE YOU...
...BUT...
I'M NOT SURE HOW TO SAY THIS, LAPHIJI...

LOOKS LIKE AUNT SONIA HAD A BIT OF A WILD SIDE NO ONE KNEW ABOUT!
SHE APPARENTLY HAD A SON OUT OF WEDLOCK!
THIS JUST CAME FROM ZI ALDA!
I CAN HARDLY BELIEVE IT, BUT OUR FAMILY JUST GOT BIGGER!
WHO WOULD'VE THOUGHT THAT OUR BELOVED AUNT SONIA WAS A PARTY GIRL?
IT'S NONE OF MY BUSINESS.
.....

...I'D BE VERY CAREFUL ABOUT WHO SEES SERIEZ...
...COME INTO YOUR BEDROOM AFTER DARK.
COME IN!

ILLSAIDE!

!
ILLSAIDE, OF COURSE IT'S YOUR BUSINESS!
HE'S AS MUCH YOUR FAMILY AS MINE!
BESIDES...
...YOU'VE GOT TO START TAKING AN INTEREST IN POLITICS IF YOU'RE GOING TO RULE CI XENETH.
AND IN CASE YOU'VE FORGOTTEN, YOU ARE THE RIGHTFUL HEIR, BROTHER.

すっ
I SHOULDN'T HAVE DONE THAT.
ILLSAIDE!
I CAN'T DO THIS.
HOW CAN I DENY HOW I FEEL ABOUT HER? I'VE BEEN IN LOVE WITH HER FOR SO LONG.
FALAN, WHAT'S WRONG?

WATCHING HER START OVER WITH ANOTHER MAN...

.....
AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF ZI ALDA, I'M HERE TO OFFICIALLY INTRODUCE MY HALF-BROTHER...
I MEAN, WE'VE BEEN GETTING MARRIED TO OUR COUSINS FOR SO LONG THAT IT'S A WONDER WE'RE NOT ALL PLAYING BANJOS AND CHEWING TOBACCO.
OUR FAMILY NEEDS AS MUCH FRESH BLOOD AS POSSIBLE!
THIS IS GREAT!
...TEARING ME APART.
NO WAY!
LADY SONIA HAD A LOVECHILD? THAT IS SO COOL!
IT WAS CERTAINLY A SURPRISE TO ME.
ANYHOW ...
...UM...

I MEAN, IF THIS KEEPS UP, WE'LL MARRY OURSELVES INTO EXTINCTION LONG BEFORE THE VAMPIRES GET A CRACK AT US!
ケラケラ
.....
YOUR MAJESTY...
HE'S 27, SO HE'S FOUR YEARS OLDER THAN ME.
AND YOU NEVER EVEN KNEW HE EXISTED. HOW WEIRD! HOW MUCH OLDER THAN YOU IS HE?
OH... SORRY! SO THIS GUY'S ...
...YOUR BIG BROTHER?
...A BIT OLD FOR YOU, BUT THEY SAY LOVE CONQUERS ALL.
THAT'S

LOVE?
YES, LOVE.
...BY GRANTING HER LAST WISH, AND ACCEPTING MY BROTHER'S PROPOSAL OF MARRIAGE.
AS I SAID, I'M HERE AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF ZI ALDA...
...TO ASK YOU TO HONOR THE MEMORY OF MY DEAR DEPARTED MOTHER...
SO DO I GET TO MEET THIS BROTHER OF YOURS BEFORE I MARRY HIM?
THAT'S LOVE IN THIS FAMILY.
WHENEVER SOMEONE WANTS SOMETHING, THEY WRITE ME A LOVE LETTER.
SHOULD HAVE KNOWN

I THOUGHT I COULD TRUST YOU, WHICH COME TO THINK OF IT, WAS PRETTY STUPID OF ME.
OF COURSE. HE'S RIGHT HERE.
I WOULDN'T BE SURPRISED IF SOMEHOW, YOU AND THE OLD FART WERE IN THIS TOGETHER
AFTER ALL, YOU LIED TO ME ABOUT WHO YOU WERE.
HERE? WHERE?!

MY OLDER BROTHER ..
.....
...IS CAPTAIN DARRES.
!?

SO... WHAT DO YOU SAY, HIGHNESS? ARE THOSE WEDDING BELLS I HEAR?
.....
Kingdom of Mil Seli

GUESS WE'LL HAVE TO STOP CALLING YOU A BASTARD, EH, CAPTAIN? IT'S NO LONGER PC
WHAAAAT?!
WHICH MEANS THAT DARRES IS HEIR TO THE ZI ALDA THRONE.

吸血遊戯
北領篇
Act.3

ボオオ
SO WOULD YOU MIND TELLING ME WHAT THE HELL'S GOING ON, SHARLEN?
OR DO YOU STILL EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE THAT THIS IS ALL PART OF YOUR PLAN?
オオ

THE QUESTION IS...WHY?
WHAT'S IN IT FOR YUUJEL?
BUT HOW DID HE GET THE REST OF THE ROYAL FAMILY TO GO ALONG WITH IT?
WHY NOT JUST CONVINCE THE PRINCESS TO MARRY HIM?
.....
IT LOOKS LIKE...
...YUUJEL FORGED A TITLE FOR THIS COMMONER.
...SO THE PRINCESS WOULD AGREE TO GET MARRIED
I AGREE.

I'LL DEAL WITH THIS DEVEL-OPMENT. THERE'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT, LORD LASSEN
WELL, WELL, WELL! WE MUST BE LIVING IN DESPERATE TIMES...
.....

...TELL ME AGAIN..
...HOW YOU'RE UNDERMINING THE FOUNDATION...
...OF THE HOUSE OF PHELIOS.
SO, SHARLEN...
YOU KNOW ME...
I'VE ALWAYS BEEN A FAN OF FAIRY TALES.
I REMEM-BER..
...WHEN WE MADE OUR BARGAIN? YOU SAID YOU'D HELP ME WIN THE THRONE OF PHELIOSTA, AT ANY COST.
MY LORD?

...IF THE MIGHTY LORD LASSEN IS SUMMONING ME.
I CAME AS FAST AS I COULD.
WHAT FIEF DO YOU WANT ME TO ANNIHILATE?
RIGHT, SHARLEN?
NO. FOR THE TIME BEING, I JUST WANT YOU TO ESCORT MY DEAR FRIEND SHARLEN TO THE CAPITAL...
...AND KEEP AN EYE ON HIM.
HE MIGHT NEED YOUR... HELP.
YOU KNOW ME, SHORT OF SLAUGHTERING A ROOMFUL OF HOMELESS BABIES OR SOMETHING, I'M GAME FOR PRETTY MUCH ANYTHING.
WE'RE NOT?
EASY, HUMÉ ...
WE'RE NOT AT THAT POINT JUST YET.

IF YOU SAY SO, MY LORD
I MEAN, NO OFFENSE, BUT YOU VAMPS KINDA PISS ME OFF. IF I'M GONNA GO THROUGH THE TROUBLE OF KILLING SOMEONE, I PREFER HIM TO STAY DEAD.
LOOKING FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU, BATS.
BUT NOT AS MUCH AS I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO HEARING THAT YOUR SERVICES ARE NO LONGER NEEDED.

OKAY, ONE MORE TIME...
MY MOTHER HAD YOU BEFORE SHE MET MY FATHER
SO THAT MAKES YOU MY HALF-BROTHER
GOT IT, BRO?
158
I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU'RE DOING THIS...
...BUT I DO KNOW WHERE YOU GOT THE IDEA.
I DID.
...AND TELL ME WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON!
.....
STOP TREATING ME LIKE AN IDIOT...
CUT IT OUT. YOU'RE LYING AND WE BOTH KNOW IT.
159

THE THREE ADOPTED PRINCES OF LA NAAN!
AM I RIGHT?!
NOT SO LOUD!
NEVER MENTION THAT AGAIN...
...OR LADY RAMIA WILL PUT A PRICE ON YOUR HEAD SO BIG...
...THAT EVERY ASSASSIN FROM HERE TO RAZENIA WILL BE HIDING UNDER YOUR BED.
160
キョロ
I STILL DON'T GET IT.
WHY ME?
I'M JUST THE ROYAL BABYSITTER.
I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT POLITICS.
I DON'T WANT TO BE YOUR BROTHER, AND I SURE AS HELL DON'T WANT TO BE YOUR PAWN!
DARRES, YOU DON'T UNDER-STAND.
THIS ISN'T ABOUT ME OR YOU. IT'S ABOUT PHELIOSTA. AND IT'S ABOUT ISHTAR.
161

WHAT?
WE'RE AT A CROSSROADS, DARRES. THE BALANCE OF POWER HAS BECOME VERY DELICATE
THE WRONG MOVE NOW COULD BE DISASTROUS FOR THE ENTIRE NATION.
BUT WHY ME?
THREE REASONS, IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER...
FIRST...
...ASHLEY THINKS IT'S ■ GOOD IDEA...
...AND WITH THE POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF HIS TASTE IN WOMEN, ASHLEY'S JUDGMENT IS FLAWLESS HE'S EVALUATED YOU ON LEVELS I CAN'T BEGIN TO FATHOM.
YOU'VE...
...GOT TO BE KIDDING.
うん
うん
SECOND...
...I LOVE ISHTAR. AND I LOVE YOU.

...PRINCESS ISHTAR...
WELL?
...IS IN LOVE WITH YOU.
!!
...THIS ONE IS THE MOST IMPORTANT, SO LISTEN UP, DARRES.
THE THIRD REASON IS THAT...
I'll leave that up to your imagination
WHAT DO YOU MEAN...
...BY "LOVE"?
THIRD.
...AND OF THE THREE...

ISN'T THAT THE CRAZIEST THING...
...YOU'VE EVER HEARD?
.....
TECH-NICALLY, THAT MEANS DARRES COULD EVEN BE KING.
YUJINN TELLING EVERY-ONE THAT DARRES IS HIS BROTHER!

SHE LOVES YOU...
...WITH ALL HER HEART.

ANYHOW, WHAT'S FOR DINNER?
.....!
.....
...WERE TO CHOOSE TO WED SIR DARRES...
IF... ...YOUR MAJESTY ...
...YOU WOULD DO SO WITH MY BLESSING.

TOO BAD THAT'LL NEVER HAPPEN.
Imagine Darres and me? Getting married?
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, BUT I THINK YUJINN'S STOPPED MIXING ALL THOSE HERBS OF HIS AND STARTED SMOKING THEM
WHAT A LOVELY DREAM.
IT WAS NICE WHILE IT LASTED.

B-BUT SIR KELD...
...THAT I WISH YOU NOTHING BUT HAPPINESS.
YOU WANTED ME TO MARRY YUUJEL SO BADLY!
...WHY?
I THOUGHT HE COULD GIVE YOU THE STRONGEST CHILD
I DID.
BUT ONLY BECAUSE YUUJEL WAS THE QUALIFIED SUITOR WITH THE LEAST AMOUNT OF ROYAL BLOOD.

WHAT?!
I HAVE DISCUSSED THE MATCH WITH YUUJEL.
AND I HAVE GIVEN IT MY SANCTION, AS YOUR OFFICIAL GUARDIAN.
...IF YOU'RE SO INCLINED, I ENCOURAGE YOU...
...TO ACCEPT YUUJEL'S... UNCONVENTIONAL PROPOSAL.
AND KNOW, HIGHNESS...
THEREFORE...

I LOVE YOU, TOO.
OH, KELD!
I LOVE YOU, OLD MAN!!
I'VE TAKEN CARE OF YOU FOR SO LONG NOW, I'VE COME TO THINK OF YOU AS...
...MY OWN DAUGHTER.
AND ALL I WANT NOW IS TO LIVE LONG ENOUGH...
...TO SEE YOUR HEALTHY CHILD... AND FOR YOU TO BE HAPPY.
BUT...
...WE CAN'T DO THIS.
THE PEOPLE TRUST US TO UPHOLD THE LAWS OF PHELIOSTA IF WE LIE TO THEM...
...WHAT RIGHT DO WE HAVE TO ENFORCE THOSE LAWS?

To be continued in Volume 11

About Valentine's Day

About Sharlen

Hi again!

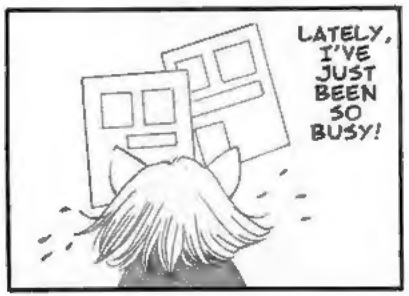
I CAN'T BELIEVE WE'VE MADE IT ALL THE WAY TO VOLUME 10!
IT'S ME, JUDAL! AND I WANT TO THANK ALL MY READERS FOR KEEPING THIS SERIES GOING!

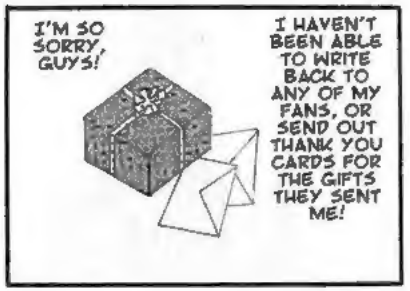
Now with 50% more softness!
IN THIS BOOK WE WRAPPED UP THE ZI ALDA ARC, THEN MOVED ON TO MIL SEII, WHICH IS CHOCK FULL OF CREEPY, EVIL PEOPLE!

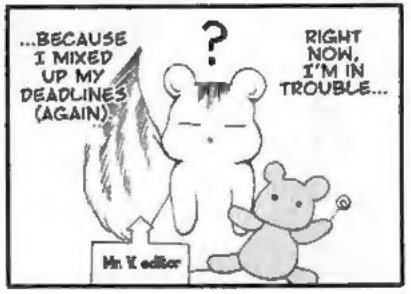
KEEP READING, SO I CAN KEEP WRITING!
Happy 10th Vol
I FEEL LIKE CELEBRATING! I'M SO HAPPY THIS SERIES HAS BEEN ABLE TO GO ON FOR SO LONG!

Post-modern-script

Finally...







I WOULD LIKE THERE TO BE AN 11TH VOLUME, YOU KNOW!
WAIT, WAS I SUPPOSED TO HAVE THAT IN BY JULY 3RD OR JULY 30TH?
YOU COULD JUST CALL AND ASK...

Home Page

VAMPIRE GAME

Next Volume...

Lassen of Mil Sell is Ishtar's cousin, and like most members of her family, is likely to become a powerful pain-in-the-neck. For starters, he's a master magician and poisoner. He also really seems to enjoy hanging out with vampires. Throw in the fact that he's been coveting Phellosta's throne for a long time, and we've got a bona fide crisis brewing in Mil Sell. But danger's not the only thing in the air. Are those wedding bells we hear? Well, maybe not, for to prove that he's part of the royal family, Darres must pass a test. If he's truly a member of the Phellos' clan, Darres should have no problem unsheathing Sidia, the Holy Sword. The problem is that he's not really royalty...is he? Looks like we'll all find out together in the next volume of Vampire Game!

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VAMPIRE GAME™

Something's rotten in Zi Alda. Lady Leene has been working hard at making Princess Ishtar absolutely miserable, but so far, her attempts have all failed. Now, the mysterious Diaage has given her the tools to end Ishtar's trip...permanently. But will her attempt to poison the princess be foiled by Darres and Ashley, or will this deadly drink be one too many for Ishtar?

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